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WAR AND CHRISTIANITY: From the Russian point of view.

Three conversations by Vladimir Solovyov; with an introduction by Stephen Graham. London: Constable and Company, Ltd., 1916. Pp. x, 188. Price, 4s. 6d. net.

In his preface to these suggestive "conversations" by Vladimir Solovyov, Mr. Stephen Graham describes the author as having been Russia's "greatest philosopher," and a "serene and happy writer." It is always dangerous to label a man as the greatest of his country, but the latter phrase is well chosen, for only an author of wide sympathies and well balanced mind could have achieved this commentary on the most controversial subjects in so equable a temper. Solovyov, who published these dialogues on Easter Day 1900, the year before he died, was spiritually a follower of Dostoieffsky: he was entirely opposed in thought to the doctrines held by Tolstoy, and it stands to his credit that he never attacked Tolstoy by name, although this book saps the fabric of his creed by making it appear ridiculous. The chief subject of discussion is 'one especially occupying the minds of all western peoples to-day, so that this translation of a remarkable work is most opportune. As the "Politician" remarks in the first Conversation: "Every one always knew that War was evil . . . and wise people know now that it is a kind of evil which cannot yet be removed once and for all in our time." The five characters, who are all Russian, represent different well defined types of thought. The "General" naturally stands for glory and romance of War, and in the earlier pages he upholds the best traditions of the military spirit. His graphic narration of the one and only occasion when he experienced true moral satisfaction is admirably told. It was an incident in the Turkish war when the Bashi Bazouks had perpetrated such horrors on the natives of an unoffending village as were not unknown in Belgium more recently. The General, who felt impelled to bring vengeance on these bandits, was filled with an ecstasy "because he had acted without reflection or hesitation" and in a quarter of an hour had killed "not one man but over a thousand." The sequel is grimly amusing, for the General is forced to acknowledge that his own men, if not restrained by him, would have shown themselves robbers of the dead enemy."

Next comes the "Politician" who fully believes in the "es-

tablishment of a lasting international peace"; he is firmly convinced, however, that "neither we nor our children will ever witness great Wars, real European Wars."

For the exponent of the great principle of not opposing evil by force we are given the Prince, who is the apostle of Tolstoyism. The third and last Conversation is largely taken up by Mr. Z. who reads a "short narrative about Antichrist," covering some forty pages.

Wherever the characters discuss their country's place in Europe they at once become interesting. In an oration on Slavophilism, the Politician explains: "In reality we are unavoidably Europeans, only with Asiatic characteristics of mind." But surely it is just these characteristics of mind which make the difference and which arouse our own constant curiosity and study of Russian thought and culture.

V. J.

CONSCIENCE AND CHRIST: Six Lectures on Christian Ethics
By Hastings Rashdall. London: Duckworth & Company,
1916. Pp. xx, 313. Price, 5s. net.

There is no one better qualified than Canon Rashdall for the task which he has set himself. What is the relation of conscience to authority? When must conscience appeal to the teaching of Jesus for justification, and how far is the teaching of Jesus justified by appeal to conscience? Dr. Rashdall is distinguished both as a Christian and as a moral philosopher. In this volume of lectures (delivered at Oberlin College in 1914) he succeeds in arbitrating between the claims of theology and ethics, not without exacting considerable sacrifices from both sides.

The reader who is interested in the technical defences of Dr. Rashdall's theory of conscience will already be familiar with them. It is enough to say that he believes in "the existence and validity of an objective morality" and in a power in us of "distinguishing between right and wrong." And moral judgments come from the intellectual part of our nature. It is to such a conscience that Jesus addresses himself. Now it follows almost inevitably, if one holds a theory of conscience similar to Dr. Rashdall's, that conscience will consist in the usual structure of prejudices of the enlightened middle classes. To this middle-class conscience the teaching of Jesus is gradually

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